(b) whether an in-house study had recommended that the Indian Air Force should go in for Unmanned Air Vehicle (UAVs) and sophisticated equipment for high-altitude warfare; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) Certain readjustments and reinforcements by Pakistan on the Line of Control and Sir Creek area have been reported. Some Pakistani reserve formations have also been moved from their permanent locations but have not been deployed near the border as yet. The situation continues to be under constant watch.

Decisions regarding acquisition of any equipment are taken after due analysis of various relevant details. The same holds good for the item referred to in the Question.

Plan to Cut off Strategically Important Lifelines in Border Areas

616. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that ISI in association with other outlawed organisations is getting ready to cut off strategically important lifelines in the border areas of the country to wage another serious Kargil type war; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Government are aware of the developments in regard to the activities of the concerned terrorist organisations and their supporters and sponsors. All appropriate steps to meet any eventuality continue to be taken.

Air Surveillance System for IAF

617. SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that inordinate delay in decision making in Defence Services resulted in making available to Air Force of SIGNIT air surveillance system to Air Force in 1999 whereas it was considered vital way back in 1990;

(b) if so, what were the circumstances which led to this situation which adversely affected the functioning of Air Force for nine years;

(c) what action has been taken in this regard; and

(d) what steps are proposed to be taken to avoid such a situation in furture?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) The system in question is an indigenous development project. The contract for the project was signed in March 1995. Flight trials are scheduled to be held in May 2000.

(b) Self-reliance is a desirable goal, specially in the sensitive field of Signal Intelligence. Some delays are inevitable in a developmental project of this magnitude.

(c) and (d) All developmental projects are monitored by designated committees which oversee their implementation.

Purchase of Multiple Rocket Launchers from Russia

618. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have plan to purachse Russia's powerful Smerch Multiple Rocket Launchers (MRL);

(b) if so, by when; and

(c) whether Government have already considered that many equipments purchased earlier by different Ministries from Russia have become incorporative in absence of spares and/or upgradation of technology?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) A proposal for procurement of Multi Barrel Rocket Launchers (MBRL) from Russia has been received from the Army HQrs. No decision in the matter has, however, yet been taken by the Government.

(c) Consequent upon the structural reorganisation of the erstwhile USSR, problems were experienced in procurement of spares for the equipments of Soviet origin. These have been largely resolved. Such aspects like required supply of spares and/or upgradation of technology are kept in mind while considering procurement of equipments from various sources.